

Message Text

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PAGE 01 BRAZZA 00078 251119Z
ACTION AF-10

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E.O. 11652: N/A
TAGS: PINT, CF
SUBJECT: NGOUABI ASSASSINATION TRIAL, JANUARY 20-22, 1978

1. SUMMARY: CIRCLE OF ACCUSED PLOTTERS HAS EXPANDED TO INCLUDE THOSE SPEAKING OUT AGAINST NGOUABI AS EARLY AS 1971 AND, ALTHOUGH NOT YET FORMALLY ARRAIGNED, PASCAL LISSOUBA. END SUMMARY.

2. JAN. 20 (DAY 18): COURT HEARD DEFENDANTS NKALA (PROTOCOL OFFICIAL WHO RECEIVED LETTER FROM MIZELE IN WHICH MASSAMBA-DEBAT ASKED FOR NGOUABI'S RESIGNATION), SAMBA-DIA-NKOUMBI, LOUTETE, AND MRS. KIKADIDI AND TWO OF HER CHILDREN. PROSECUTION ARGUED THAT KIKADIDI HAD CANCELLED A TRIP TO EUROPE BECAUSE MASSAMBA-DEBAT HAD ORDERED HIM TO KIDNAP NGOUABI. FURTHER, THAT VARIOUS RUMORS NOTWITHSTANDING, KIKADIDI INDEED WAS IN BRAZZAVILLE MARCH 18, 1977. COURT FINALLY DROPPED CHARGES AGAINST PROSPER GANDZION AND REDUCED THOSE AGAINST PARENTS OF KIKADIDI. PROSECUTION LASHED OUT AGAINST WITNESS BRANCO AND WHAT PROSECUTOR FELT TO BE INVOLVEMENT OF ENTIRE TOWN OF BOKO IN EVENTS.

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PAGE 02 BRAZZA 00078 251119Z

3. JAN. 21 (DAY 19): PROSECUTION ARGUED THAT AN ASSOCIATE OF LISSOUBA, MOUNGOUNGA-NKOMBO-NGUILA, WAS, ALONG WITH MASSAMBA-DEBAT, RESPONSIBLE FOR CONSPIRACY AGAINST NGOUABI.

4. JAN. 22 (DAY 20): PROSECUTION CHARGED THAT MOUNGOUNGA-NKOMBO-NGUILA HAD BEEN RESPONSIBLE FOR ANTI-NGOUABI ACTS SINCE 1971, ORGANIZING STUDENT STRIKE, AND GENERAL STRIKE OF MARCH 24, 1976.

PROSECUTOR OKOKO THEN READ LETTER FROM MOUNGOUNGA-NKOMBO-NGUILA TO LISSOUBA, WRITTEN WHILE FORMER WAS OCCUPYING OFFICIAL GOCB POSITION IN JAPAN. LETTER PRAISED LISSOUBA AND DENIGRATED NGOUABI. COURT FINISHED DAY'S WORK HEARING DEFENDANT ABA-GANDZION.

5. COMMENT: PROSECUTION NOW IS TRYING TO DRAG IN ALL OPPONENTS OF NGOUABI AS PART OF CONSPIRACY IN WHICH THEY MAY OR MAY NOT HAVE PLAYED PART. SEVERAL TIMES DURING JANUARY 22 TESTIMONY, PROSECUTION CRITICIZED SOUTHERNERS AS SUCH, DECRYING ADVANTAGES WHICH THEY HAD WHICH WERE DENIED TO NORTH. THE DEFENSE STILL IS DOING VERY LITTLE FOR ITS CLIENTS. WHAT THE PROSECUTION HAS FAILED TO SHOW THUS FAR IS PRECISELY HOW MASSAMBA-DEBAT EXPECTED TO SEIZE POWER FOLLOWING KIDNAPPING OF NGOUABI. ALTHOUGH TRIAL CONTINUES TO PREOCCUPY BRAZZAVILLE, GOVERNMENT NOW IS PERMITTING SPORTS EVENTS BY NATIONAL YOUTH GROUP (UJSC) WHILE TRIAL IS GOING ON, AND COVERAGE OF PROCEEDINGS IS BEING RELEGATED TO OTHER THAN LEAD ITEM IN PRESS. END COMMENT.

6. FURTHER CONCERNING CHOUKROUN AFFAIR: DEFENSE ATTORNEYS INVOLVED IN NGOUABI TRIAL RELEASED MESSAGE JANUARY 23 STATING THAT THEY ALWAYS HAVE BEEN FREE IN THE EXERCISE OF THEIR PROFESSION IN CONGO, AND THAT THE PRESENT PROCEEDINGS ARE INDEED OPEN TO THE PUBLIC AND ARE BEING EXERCISED DEMOCRATICALLY. FRENCH LAWYERS INVOLVED IN TRIAL ARE AMONG THOSE WHO HAVE SIGNED COMMUNIQUE.

KATZEN

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PAGE 03 BRAZZA 00078 251119Z

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